

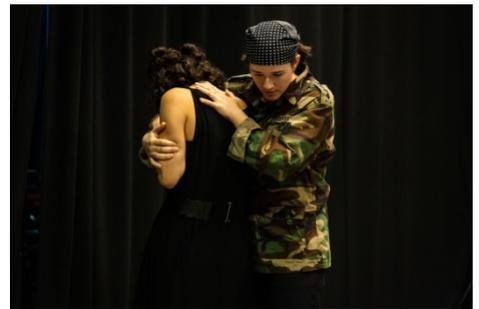
2025 IAF SUPPORTED LAMDA INTENSIVE - LUCA SARDELIS

My name is Luca Sardelis; I'm 5'5" and based in Adelaide, Australia. Thanks to the support of the IAF, this Euro-summer, I spent eight weeks undertaking the Shakespearean and Jacobean Summer Intensive (SS8) at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts (LAMDA).

While I was expecting world-class training from this highly reputed school, this course was more intensive - and more rewarding - than I anticipated. Every day was a vocal, physical, and mental workout. Mornings consisted of three technique classes: one in vocal or singing training, one in movement (stage combat, applied movement, historical dance) and another in either text analysis or acting. These primed my cohort with new tools and inspiration for the afternoons, when we worked with our performance directors from 2:15 to 5:30pm. There were about 33 students in SS8 this year, split into three age-based cohorts. We rotated between tutors each morning but worked with our own project directors in the afternoons. I was fortunate to tackle *Lady Macbeth* in *Macbeth* under the guidance of the powerhouse that is Debbie Korley, and to explore *The White Devil* as Isabella with the wonderful Kalungi Ssebandeke - both exceptional directors and actors, actively working in London's classical theatre scene.

I hold such fondness for my "company" of actors. At first, I was frustrated to find we'd be working almost exclusively within our small groups. I'd come here to *find my people*, and now they'd been predetermined for me. But, in true "trust the process" fashion, we became a tight-knit family within the week. The structure of the program allowed us to grow comfortable and confident enough around one another to feel safe taking risks: singing solo in front of others for the first time, improvising movement, and giving bold character offers without fear of judgement.

Why LAMDA? I considered many theatre courses, particularly in New York, before putting them all behind me to choose LAMDA. Put simply, the course was longer, the focus more specific, and the curriculum more comprehensive. Most of my professional acting experience is in contemporary film, yet I found my original passion for acting on the stage. As I hadn't worked on a theatre show in the past five years, I wanted to undertake this course as an opportunity to refresh and upskill my theatre technique. The course's deep dive into classical theatre has exponentially increased my confidence in my own capacity and stage craft. Crammed with new information and techniques, I know far more than I did before about my mind, body, and brain. I also have a clearer sense of what I *don't* know, and what I want to learn next. My dormant passion for theatre has been reignited, and I've been introduced to playwrights and dramaturgs whose work I now feel equipped to explore more thoroughly independently.



Between learning our lines, we watched others perform theirs - from the West End to the Globe (they're not very far apart). We went to gigs, threw dinner parties, and rehearsed our production of Macbeth in Hyde Park. I reunited with old friends, made new ones, danced at Brixton Blues Kitchen, and window-shopped my way down Portobello Road.

The course's trip to Stratford-upon-Avon was one of my fondest UK memories. Quaint, picturesque, and steeped in history that this course had primed me to properly appreciate, it was everything I'd imagined the British countryside to be. The accommodation was ridiculously adorable and the Royal Shakespeare Company theatre, intimate and inviting. The Game of Thrones fans in my cohort were thrilled that we GoT to witness Rose Leslie lead the ensemble of *The Constant Wife*: a witty and satirical domestic drama.

Eight weeks later, I've come away with two classical theatre productions under my belt, a more comprehensive acting toolbox, lifelong friends from across the globe, acting community and industry connections in London, and a renewed passion and confidence for the stage. I can't thank the IAF enough for their support and am so grateful for all of the beautiful memories and lessons that will now live inside of me forever because of it.

